(v) Thrust has been given to reduce manpower through Voluntary Retirement Scheme as well as re-deployment of manpower in a planned manner by imparting training as well as upgradation of skill of the existing workers.

(vi) Steps are also being taken to improve the production by opening of new mines either through lease finance or by joint venture.

Foreign Participation in Coal Sector

4045. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that it has been decided to re-open coal mining cent per cent to the private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether foreign participation will be permitted in the coal sector;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of the answer to part (a) of the question.

(c) to (e) Foreign companies are not permitted to do coal mining in the country. However, foreign investment in Indian companies generating power, producing cement and iron & steel, which are engaged in coal mining for captive consumption, is permitted.

Hindi Typewriters in the Ministry

†4046. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI : Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state :

(a) the names of offices under his ministry/department where not a single Hindi typewriter is available until now;

(b) the reasons for not putting demands for Hindi typewriters in these offices until now; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.